

Romans 23-25

23: Two Sections : Sanhedrin and Murder Plots

vv. 1-11 The High Priests: there are (oddly) two because of previous interventions Chaiphas - the power behind the throne, Annas - the current actual priest and vv 12-end (transfer to Caesaeria)

A pivotal period in both Jewish and Christian history

Definition of evil and Justice and Canon of Scripture

Sanhedrin: the "senate of the Jews - a ruling council

The lesser Sanhedrin: councils which presided in each Jewish city with 21 members

Greater Sanhedrin 71 member (always on odd number to prevent ties)

These had the power to tax and spend, render legal judgements

Greater: could officially wage war, presided over the calendar, last word on Torah. Met in the Hall of Hewn stones. (no Iron) Claimed descent from the 70 in days of Moses

High priest: head of religion/ nasi political head of state after 191 BC

*Pharisees: full weighted canon of scripture, angels, gehenna, synagogue J, led by the rabbis Jews

Judgement day, devoted to the law

*Saducees: Torah alone Scripture, well educated, tied to priesthood temple worship

*Zelots: see Numbers 25: being zealous saves from plague

Here: trial of Paul: begins with a sham trial

Paul responds by causing a brawl between sects

*Notice: parallels of trial of Jesus and Paul: both are struck, both sent to the Romans

*the importance of bearing witness

*Paul's nephew show us: a well known family

*Antonius Felix (former slave apt by Claudius as Procurator)

Notice: no one wants to condemn Paul: passing the buck

*postponement of trial: a way of avoiding mistakes and condemnation

24

We note the flattery of the speakers

- We note that Paul insists that this is a religious debate not legal and in any event he is innocent
- Another postponement: so easy to ;leave it for another - also we are always on the edge of violence here

- *Felix awards Paul some special concessions
- 25 *Portius Festus: Procurator for only two years before death d. 61 AD?
Festus tries to send Paul back to Jerusalem, Paul resists
- *Paul invokes the right to appeal to Caesar: the last straw
 - 15-end: Agrippa and Bernice
 - o Great grandchildren of Herod the Great
 - Raised in Rome as clients
 - Incestuous relationship
 - *looking at Paul for mere amusement